



THE ANTI-CRUELTY SOCIETY

A Commitment to Caring *Since 1899*

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CLINIC PATIENT CARE MANUAL

INTRODUCTION

About the Anti-Cruelty Society Clinic

The Clinic serves animals undergoing spay/neuter surgeries, shelter animals and pets who have been adopted and are ill or injured. The Clinic also serves animals that live in low-income or unemployed households, were in the adoption room and became ill, or are out-of-state transfers waiting for their physical exam. The Clinic has six veterinarians on staff and additional vet technicians and assistants who provide treatments throughout the building.

The vet technicians feed animals twice daily: in the mornings until 11:00 am and in the afternoons from 3:00 PM until 6:00 PM (5:00 PM on weekends). In addition to treatments, the Clinic staff also perform surgery, conduct spay and neuter operations, give physical exams to shelter animals and give outpatient exams for low income families, adopters, and foster parents.

Clinic Patient Care Program Objective

The purpose of the Clinic Patient Care program is to bring vital assistance to the staff and animals who are in the clinic. As a volunteer in the Clinic Patient Care (CPC) program, you will have many opportunities to assist the vet techs in caring for sick and injured animals, as well as those who will soon be having or have recently had surgery. Knowing that you played an important role in caring for, rehabilitating and comforting such animals can be very rewarding. As a volunteer in this program you will have an opportunity to make the shelter experience better for the pets in our charge while also preparing them for the adoption rooms.

Clinic Patient Care Volunteer Responsibilities Include:

- 1) Socializing Pet Patients. Clinic Patient Care volunteers provide attention, socialization and comfort to sick and injured animals who are housed in the clinic holding rooms. By providing these pets with daily enrichment, the Clinic Patient Care volunteers help to meet the psychological and emotional needs of clinic animals which helps to relieve some of the stress, boredom, frustration and related behavioral deterioration that a pet may experience upon confinement in a clinical environment..
- 2) Provide Staff Support. Clinic Patient Care volunteers can clean out the cages/refresh the animals' living quarters and recording their findings on the daily log. Volunteers may also prep cages for returning surgery patients or new arrivals.

Importance of Following Procedure and Policy

As a volunteer it is important that you follow all procedures and policies. These have been compiled from the knowledge and experiences of other volunteers and staff, and have been created in an effort to protect the animals, volunteers, staff, and public while at The Anti-Cruelty Society. Adhering to these procedures will assist you with your Clinic Patient Care volunteer responsibilities and experience. If at any time you have any questions, issues or concerns, please bring them to the attention of the Volunteer Services Department.

Animals in the Clinic may be experiencing stress as a result of surgery, illness, or simply being confined to an unfamiliar environment. For this reason it is vital that volunteers follow the policies and procedures that are outlined in this animal. It is also important to read an animal's body language before handling them. If an animal growls, bats at you, or exhibits other aggressive behavior, it is best to leave that animal alone to avoid an incident that could lead to injury and/or potential euthanasia of the animal. Some hospitalized animals may not be social, so pay particular attention to their tail, ears, and posture.

GETTING STARTED

When You Can Volunteer

Clinic Patient Care Volunteers may volunteer in the clinic Monday-Sunday. On the weekends if you want to assist vet techs with cleaning cages plan to arrive in the morning. If you want to strictly socialize the animals in the clinic plan to arrive in the afternoon to give the vet techs time to clean and feed. Monday-Friday you can arrive at any time. Depending upon when you arrive during the week, you can plan to assist with prepping cages for the animals having surgery, as well as refreshing cages and socialization of animals not having surgery.

Holidays

The Anti-Cruelty Society is closed for public adoptions on all major holidays. Clinic staff always need assistance on these days, so please consider volunteering if you can. There are no surgeries on holidays.

Where You Can Volunteer

Volunteers work in a variety of spaces within the spay/neuter clinic area. Your program trainer will review each room with you as well as specific space protocols that you will need to follow. Which rooms you volunteer in will depend on your experience. If you have 25 hours in a volunteer dog program you will be trained in and will work in the dog rooms in the clinic. If you have 25 hours in a volunteer cat program you will be trained in and will work in the cat rooms in the clinic. If you have 25 hours in both a dog and cat program you are free to be trained in and work in both the cat and dog rooms in the clinic.

Contagious animals will be housed in the clinic's isolation room. Volunteers should only enter these spaces if directed by staff. Volunteers should also remain aware of any signage that may be present on a room's door in case that space is under specialized quarantine. Please be sure to read any kennel notes that are posted and any signs posted on any of the room doors. Any cages marked with "staff only," "wear gloves," "may bite," "hair loss," are strictly off-limits to volunteers. Please do not go into those cages or handle those animals in any way.

What to Wear While Volunteering

When you are volunteering the following dress code must be adhered to:

- Wear an Anti-Cruelty Society volunteer T-shirt or any other Society logo top.
- Wear long pants (not shorts).
- Wear a clean volunteer apron.
- Wear closed toe, rubber soled shoes. Sandals are not allowed.
- Wear your volunteer ID badge and make sure it is visible.

Before You Volunteer

Volunteers are encouraged to set a consistent day in which to perform their CPC duties. This not only helps other volunteers with their scheduling but also allows you to connect with a specific group of staff on your chosen day. Volunteers are not required to come in weekly – but whatever schedule you set should be booked on the Volunteer Schedule under Clinic > Clinic Patient Care.

When You Arrive

- Sign in at the front desk.
- Store personal items in the Volunteer Office.
- Put on your apron and volunteer badge.
- Head to the clinic and check in with the veterinary technician assigned to the rooms. Be sure to let them know how long you will be staying for your shift. Whenever in the clinic area always look through the door's window before entering a room. This will alert you to any loose animals, dogs tied out or people working just on the other side of the door.

Checking in with Staff

All Clinic Patient Care volunteers are **required** to check-in with staff before engaging in any activities with the cats and dogs. In order to prevent the accidental spread of highly contagious diseases and to protect you from working with animals that are in no condition to be touched, **it is critical that you take your directions from the Clinic staff regarding which animals you can interact with.** Do not work with animals that you have not received permission to interact with.

The clinic staff will alert you to the following:

- Animals who are in the Clinic for a long time and are showing signs of depression. These animals will benefit from socialization.
- Any animals that are not eating their food. Spending time working with these animals is especially important for their health and well-being.
- Animals who are strictly off limits due to health or behavior.
- Animals that will be having surgery that day (Mon-Fri).

If no one is in the clinic dog or cat rooms go to the pre-op/post-op area and ask which vet tech is assigned to the dog and cat room. Explain that you are a Clinic Patient Care volunteer and that you are checking in for the day. They will help you locate a vet tech so you can receive instruction.

Before Leaving:

- Notify staff and other volunteers in the clinic that you are leaving. This way personnel knows how many people are currently in the rooms and that you are no longer available to assist them with the animals.
- Log your hours in your Volunteer Profile. Using a volunteer computer, open a browser window and go to the following website: www.myvolunteerpage.com. Log your hours under Clinic> Clinic Patient Care.

VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES SATURDAY & SUNDAY

1) Provide Clinic Staff Support Saturday & Sunday

Clinic Patient Care volunteers act as an extra set of eyes and hands for the clinic staff and patients. In the morning and early afternoon on the weekends you can help make the animal's environment clean and comfortable by assisting vet techs in their routine care. One of the most practical ways in which a volunteer can assist staff is by helping to spot-clean or refresh kennels. Below are the basic guidelines for how to correctly clean in the clinic. Wear gloves and be sure to change gloves between each cage and wash exposed skin. When spot-cleaning it is important to minimize handling and keep animals in their cages to reduce stress.

How to Spot Clean With an Animal in the Cage:

Upon working with a cage note where items are placed and place everything back where you found it.

- Introduce yourself to the animal. Use one hand to occupy or block the pet's passage and the other hand to remove soiled items (litter pan, bedding, water bowl, toys, etc). If you are working with a large or rambunctious dog, connect with staff if you are not sure where to safely tie the dog while spot cleaning.
- Gather information from each cage you interact with and use the form that is located in the cat holding room in a file holder (a copy of this form can be found at the end of this manual). Fill out the top of the volunteer form with your name and date. Record your observations by referring to the animal's cage number. Record if an animal is sneezing repeatedly and if it has urinated and/or defecated. If you notice anything of concern (i.e., blood in the stool, etc.), please do not dispose of the soiled papers or litter box. Notify a vet assistant or veterinarian in the event a stool sample needs to be taken. Record if the animal has an untouched food dish.
- Specifically for cats: pull out the litter box, record the appropriate information on the volunteer sheet and replace the newspaper liner and litter. If the pan is too soiled use a new pan. If no litter was used (only torn up pieces of newspaper) replace with the same.
- Specifically for dogs: Remove newspaper and note appropriate information on the volunteer sheet.
- Remove the rest of the items from the cage. Place clean paper (two layers), blankets/towel, water bowl, litter pan, box (if there was one) and toy in the cage for cats, clean paper, blankets/towel, water bowl and toy for dogs. If you removed toys from any cage, that toy must be placed back with that animal. If you forget who the toy belonged to it must be properly disinfected before using again. Please be sure each animal has a toy, even if there wasn't one in the cage originally.
- Be sure to rinse the water bowl and add fresh water (if there is no water bowl check with a vet tech before adding one).
- Close cage door, change gloves, and move onto next cage.

How to Prepare an Empty Cage for a New, Non Surgical Arrival:

- Remove all contents of the cage including loose food.
- Spray all surfaces (walls, floor and ceiling) with Accel and wipe with a damp washcloth.
- Spray Accel onto washcloth and clean both sides of the cage doors, being sure to check each rung as food can get stuck there.
- While the cage is drying, mix a bleach solution of ½ cup bleach to one gallon of water.
- When the cage is dry, using a washcloth wipe all surfaces with the bleach solution. Let dry.
- Finally, wipe all surfaces with a damp washcloth (water only).
- When cage is dry add 3-4 layers of newspaper for dogs, and 2 for cats.

Also note that bleach and Accel should never be mixed. Do not use containers that contained Accel for mixing bleach solution.

Additional Cleaning Notes: If an animal has a bit of vomit, blood or feces on the walls of the cage you can use a washcloth to clean it (if needed you may spray a washcloth with a bit of Accel). If an animal has excessively painted their kennel with vomit, feces or discharge, a thorough cleaning will be necessary. Check in with a staff member before beginning such an intensive cleaning. If staff give you permission, place the cat in a carrier or empty cage; tie the dog or place in a separate run and wipe their cage with a mixture of bleach and water. Paper the cage, refresh water bowl and return kennel accessories. Place used cat carriers by the lift so they can be taken to the dunk tank in the Intake department. If you place an animal in a different cage to clean their current cage you will have to clean the substitute cage once the animal is placed back in the original cage.

When cleaning a cage, if an animal's toy falls from the cage onto the floor, do not put the toy back into the cage without disinfecting it. The animal's toys can be cleaned using bleach/water solution or Accel. Be sure to rinse thoroughly. Do not use the bleach water used to clean cages on the animal's toys or water bowls.

Be sure that each animal's cage is securely latched when you close the door. In the event an animal gets out of the cage, make every attempt to immediately retrieve it (if safe and appropriate) and place it back in their cage. If you are unable to retrieve the animal, announce to others in the room that there is a loose cat or dog and make sure the door to the room you are working in is closed in order to contain the animal to one area. Contact a staff member to help you retrieve the loose animal. Intake staff are specially trained to do so.

2) Socialize Pet Patients Saturday & Sunday

Clinic animals need socialization just like animals elsewhere in the shelter. In the afternoon you can spend time performing this needed task in the clinic:

- If they have not yet eaten spend time encouraging them to eat (see “feeding animals” in future pages of this manual for more info).
- Groom dogs and brush cats (see “grooming animals” in future pages of this manual for more info).
- Spend face time with each animal in the cage. Go slow, remembering that they are sick. Volunteers should carefully observe an animal’s body language and cues to ensure the animal is not being stressed while socializing. Cats in particular become stressed easily so volunteers should use caution. Handle animals gently and with patience. Speak to the animal with a soft, gentle voice before reaching into a cage. Animals recovering from surgery should be left alone.

For Cats (CPC Cat Volunteers):

- Do not take the cat out of the cage. Only socialize cats while they are in the cage.
- First, turn sideways and stand or crouch by the cage. Being sideways ensures you will not end up leaning into the cage which could overwhelm the cat. You may extend your hand toward the cat, but should stop two or three inches away. This is an invitation to the cat and will let you know if the cat is interested in meeting you.
- If the cat leans forward to sniff and doesn’t move away, it is likely fine for you to gently pet the top of the cat’s head, scratch its chin or softly rub its cheek. If the cat enjoys this, you can pull your hand back a few inches to attempt to lure the cat forward for more attention. If the cat comes forward or becomes more active in the cage, you should spend another minute petting and talking to the cat.
- If the cat retreats, you shouldn’t reach farther back to pet the cat, but wiggle your fingers and encourage the cat to return to the front of the cage for more attention. Also, watch for signs that indicate the cat is becoming over-stimulated and stop petting if need be.
- If the cat does not accept the invitation for attention, entice the cat to play using a straw or pipe cleaner (move it slowly back and forth on or under the paper or blanket a few inches away from the cat; if the cat watches it but doesn’t paw at it, move the item up the wall of the cage or across the top of the cat’s hiding box if it is under one). You may use a wand toy, but begin with the stick end and not the toy end. Again, if the cat seems to be interested but isn’t playing, offer the toy end (a Cat Charmer is often the most successful toy) but move it above and do not flick or throw the toy at the cat.

Please do not remove cats from their cages. We don’t want to spread disease.

For Dogs (CPC Dog Volunteers):

- Do not allow dogs to wander about the room. They may be taken via leash for a walk through the clinic if permission has been received from a vet tech or, if the shelter is not yet open to the public, in the courtyard (again – with permission from a vet tech). Prevent contact between your dog and all other dogs. This reduces the exposure to infectious diseases and discourages aggressive behavior. Clean up after your dog if it defecates. Be sure to record the stool information on the volunteer form when you return to the clinic.
- Wait for the dog to sit (or stand calmly) before opening the kennel door. If the dog jumps up as you are lifting the door latch, stop and wait for calm, polite behavior before proceeding. Stop and wait (closing the kennel door if needed) as many times as necessary, every step of the way, until the dog remains calm while you open the door. When polite behavior is exhibited, reward with a “yes” and move forward through the doors to the hallway.
- Help dogs learn polite behavior on leash. Say “yes” when the dog offers any 'adoptable' behavior, such as eye contact, sit, loose leash, quiet, four paws on floor, or any other polite behavior.
- Remove and relocate a dog from any situation where they are too stimulated or distracted to experience success.
- For dogs that are not allowed out to the courtyard they may be walked in the clinic hallways or tied out in the Dog Room. If you get permission, put a leash on the dog and keep the dog under your control and **away from the other caged dogs**. You may play with toys, offer the dog a bowl of water (only if it has a water bowl already), socialize etc. This gives the dog a chance to move around out of the cage and to interact with you. Toys are stored on the food cart, bottom shelf in the Dog Room.

****It should be noted that we do not give treats to dogs in the clinic unless approved by a vet tech first.****

Additional tasks that volunteers can help with include:

- Restocking the newspapers in the cat and dog rooms.
- Placing dirty water bowls in dishwasher for cleaning.
- Emptying the trash and transporting both trash and laundry upstairs using the lift.
- Refilling towel bins and litter as needed.

VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES MONDAY-FRIDAY**Provide Clinic Staff Support & Socialization Monday-Friday**

1. When you arrive in the clinic on a weekday check in with a vet tech. You can usually find them in the Cat or Dog Room (do not enter the surgical suite unless you cannot find a vet tech anywhere else on the floor). Let them know you are a Clinic Patient Care volunteer and ask which animals are having surgery that day (or which are not, whichever list is shorter). Any animal having surgery cannot have water, food or treats so this is a vital piece of information you will need to start your day in the clinic. Next ask if there is anything else you should know about the remaining animals.
2. In the morning you are now free to refresh the cages of the animals not having surgery. This is the same process as on the weekend. You can also prep the empty cages of the animals that will be returning from surgery. This entails spot cleaning the empty cage and leaving **only** lots of paper and a clean towel or flat blanket for warmth and padding. For cats write their cage number on a small piece of paper or paper towel and place in the clean litter box. The litter box, water bowl and toy (if there was one) then go on the floor under the counter. Do not attempt to spot clean a cage with dog in it that has a sticker on its head. This animal has been pre tranquilized and can be unpredictable. Continually keep an eye out for animals leaving for surgery. Those cages should be spot cleaned first to ensure the returning animal has a clean cage to be placed in. Things are busy during the week. Having a CPC volunteer help prep cages for returning surgery patients is a great help.
3. Pre or post surgery if you see any vomit or blood in a cage promptly notify a vet tech or PSR volunteer (leave it for them to look at). There is no reason for alarm, but it is a help to point it out. The animal may need additional meds or medical attention.
4. If you encounter a dirty cage with a dog in it that has had surgery please leave it as is unless the animal is definitely wide awake. The animal should not be rolling, trying to stand up, whining or crying. Recovering from anesthesia is different for each animal - younger ones tend to bounce back quicker, as do animals with less body fat. Do not attempt to reach into the cage of any animal if you are not completely sure it is fully recovered from the anesthesia. Get a vet tech or PSR volunteer to assess the situation.
5. During the week you are also allowed to socialize the animals not recovering from surgery. The procedure for this is the same as on the weekend. Later in the afternoon when the surgery animals are safely awake from the anesthesia you can offer them a toy and socialization.
6. Other things you can do to help include restocking litter in the cat room and towels in the dog and cat room, restocking the newspapers in the cat and dog room, placing dirty water bowls in the dishwasher for cleaning, and emptying the trash and transporting both trash and laundry upstairs using the lift.

GENERAL CLINIC POLICIES

Basic Hygiene

Sanitation is very important in reducing the spread of disease among shelter animals. Anyone who handles or touches any animal or its environment has the potential to spread disease. Depending on the disease, infectious particles may be in the animal's fur, saliva, urine, feces, and vomit, in the air or on the surface of the cage. By touching any of the animals or the materials in its cage, these particles can remain on your skin or glove and be transmitted to another animal if the hands are not washed thoroughly and gloves are not changed between animals. In a shelter situation some of the diseases such as parvovirus can result in euthanasia or the death of an animal; anyone who improperly handles an animal may be contributing to a possible deadly outcome for the animal.

Volunteers are asked to follow the basic hygiene guidelines below to prevent the spread of germs and pathogens throughout the clinic and beyond.

- **Thorough hand washing:** Volunteers should thoroughly wash their hands with soap and hot water after every animal encounter or after handling something that came in contact with an animal. Rubbing your hands together for at least 10 seconds and then putting on a new pair of gloves is a good basic practice. The longer your contact time with soap, the more thorough the hand washing.
- **Minimize Clothing Contact:** If you are working with a dog or cat that sneezes and sprays mucus on your apron change into a clean top before working with another animal.
- **Protecting Personal Pets:** If you have animals at home, you may want to change into clean clothes and shoes before entering your home in order to prevent contaminating your animal. Some volunteers bring a change of clothes to the Society and change here before leaving. Other volunteers keep a bag at their door and use it to stow shoes and clothes as they return home. In addition to bringing a change of clothes volunteers should also ensure their personal pets are up-to-date on all their vaccinations before you begin volunteering anywhere in the organization.
- **Segregating Supplies:** Many diseases and parasites are passed through stool which is why proper supply segregation is important. Keep the cleaning cloths or bleach water for cages and litter boxes separate from the cloths and bleach water used for cleaning toys and bowls. Please minimize the transfer of items from room to room to help reduce the spread of infections. Some transfer of supplies such as litter may be unavoidable.

Feeding Animals

Volunteers are asked not to feed clinic animals unless special permission is obtained. Feeding the animals is especially complex because some animals are on special diets while others are scheduled to have surgery and are not allowed any food or water. Only the clinic staff may give the animals food, however if you notice an animal's water bowl is empty, ask a vet tech if it is okay to refill it.

Please note that although volunteers are not allowed to put food in the animals' cages, they are encouraged to spend time with those animals that are not eating in an attempt to get them eat the food the vet techs have already placed in their cages. Some cats will eat more of their serving of moist cat food if you "mound" the leftover moist food back into the center of the food tray. With your fingers or a spoon, simply scoop the leftover food back into the center of the food tray. For dry food try gently shaking the food dish to initiate interest in the food. Not only do they eat more, but you are having a social interaction with them. If you are unsure as to which animals need special attention, please check with a vet tech. Do not introduce any new food into the kennel unless explicitly directed to do so by staff.

Grooming Animals

Volunteer are encouraged to assist staff in providing basic grooming to animals being housed in the clinic. Do note that under no circumstance should a volunteer attempt to remove any matting on an animal with scissors or any cutting instrument. If you are concerned that an animal is uncomfortable due to matting, please advise a staff member so that they can evaluate the situation and assist in making the animal more comfortable.

Brushing: When brushing or combing most animals you should move your tool in the same direction as the hair growth. When the cat or dog has long hair they need to be "back brushed." To do this, brush with the hair, then against the hair, and then back with the hair. This way you can brush out mats and make sure they don't have tangles. Always remove the hair from the tools you've used and disinfect them when finished.

Trimming Nails: When working with cats check to see if their nails need trimming. If you do not feel comfortable trimming a particular cat's nails but see that it is needed, notify a staff member for assistance. You should also check with a vet tech first as an animals scheduled for spay/neuter will have their nails trimmed while under anesthesia. If you have received permission from a vet tech, trim nails when it is quiet and calm in the room as cats can become easily stressed during times of high activity, making it difficult to trim.

Volunteers should make it daily practice to touch and handle cat's paws. This will desensitize them to being touched – making nail trimmings much easier for volunteers, staff, and future adopters. Do not attempt to trim a dog's nails. This is a tricky procedure and if done incorrectly it can injure the dog.

VOLUNTEER SHEET

Date: _____

[illegible]

CONCLUSION

We greatly appreciate the attention, comfort, and care you will be giving the animals as well as for the assistance you will provide to the clinic staff. Both the animals and staff appreciate your efforts on their behalf.

If you should have any questions regarding volunteering within the Clinic Patient Care program, please connect with a member of the Volunteer Services or Clinic team for assistance.

On behalf of the animals and staff, thank you for choosing to volunteer in the Clinic Patient Care Program! We are excited to have you on this special team!

